



Plain Brown Rapper

THE SAA NEWSLETTER

Carrying the message of hope to the sex addict who still suffers.

JULY 1996

Vol.8, No.7

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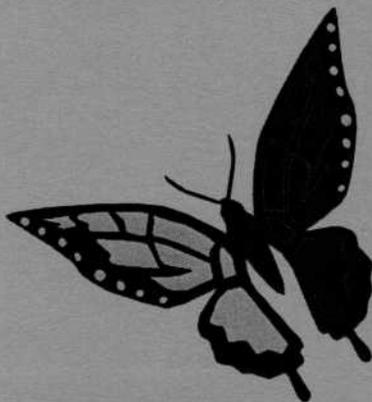
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Welcome!

Greetings, and welcome to the July issue of the *PBR*! It's already August as I write this, and I must begin by apologizing for the delay in delivering this publication. It is my responsibility as your trusted servant to make sure the ISO has a copy of the *PBR* to distribute in a timely manner, and I have not been diligent in doing so.

To all of you who send in articles for publication, I want to extend a personal note of gratitude. Your efforts make the *PBR* possible, and your willingness to share with the fellowship is appreciated.

Recently, several contributors have asked about the status of their submissions. Processing a manuscript for publication in the *PBR* currently involves:

- 1) mail or e-mail your submission to the ISO or Editor
- 2) I will mail you an acknowledgement form (recently revised for faster response time). I can only send you an

acknowledgement if you include your address (written legibly) with your submission.

3) The manuscript is held with all other submissions until a suitable opportunity for publication arises. What does this mean? It means that not all submissions will be published as soon as they are received. Time-sensitive items have a higher priority. And some items may not be published immediately due to space considerations, or the need to retype or edit the item. (One note: items submitted on computer disk or by e-mail are more likely to be published sooner since they don't have to be retyped).

4) You deserve to be honored for your effort! Please be sure to include your first name and initial on all pages of your manuscript (or sign it Anonymous if you don't want your name published). Wishing you peace and serenity,
Steve B.

The *Plain Brown Rapper* (*PBR*) is published monthly by the International Service Organization of Sex Addicts Anonymous.

The opinions expressed in any article are those of the author and not necessarily those of SAA as a whole. Take what you like and leave the rest.

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Send all submissions for publication to the Editor, c/o ISO of SAA. You may also send submissions via e-mail to EditorPBR@aol.com.

RECOVERY WORD SEARCH

Benefits of 12-Step Work

B O U N D A R I E S S E N E L O H W F R
Y A P O E L S N C R O G L Q Z E D I R P
T R L U R Y H T A E A N N U P R S S I T
I A O A B G I E E L S A N I T Y T D E C
R C S N N R P G P T I E X I R A X O N P
U E P C A C O R R Z O S L V R A Y M D I
T C H C T T E I D O M I T F U A C G S E
A N I O S J P T R K W M N R E S H R H N
M A G N P R A Y E R I T T G E S U A I W
N T H F I E S S A T O T H L Y E T T P T
E P E I R E O P M O P I G T Y N Z E S N
N E R D I C T S S H A R I N G N N O E E
U C P E T S U R T I T V V F I E T P A M
R C O N U E I B V R I W I E R P S E C L
T A W C A C T O O T E H T G D O S N C L
U N E E L I L B A P N N Y T I T N E D I
R T R U I O P E Y X C K G M O D E E R F
I O P Z T H R V E S E O N T I F L E S L
N S T A Y C A M I T N I U J H T L O H U
G R A D I T U D E W S S E N E R A W A F

WORD LIST

ACCEPTANCE
SPIRITUALITY
AWARENESS
BALANCE
BOUNDARIES
ENERGY
INTIMACY
FREEDOM
GRATITUDE
SANITY
SELF-ESTEEM
MATURITY
OPENNESS
PRAYER

TRUST
WHOLENESS
WISDOM
STRENGTH
SHARING
PATIENCE
PEACE
NURTURING
INTEGRITY
IDENTITY
HOPE
CREATIVITY
CONFIDENCE
DREAMS

FULFILLMENT
CHOICES
GROWTH
PRIDE
HIGHER POWER
FRIENDSHIPS
CARING

Steps & Traditions

Step Seven: Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

Working Steps Six and Seven, or was it Four and Five?

After working a fourth step for years, a friend told me I should stop so I could give it away and move on to the other steps. I started looking for someone to do my Fifth Step with and found a spiritual counselor who wanted me to limit my Fifth Step to one page. This request encouraged me to distill from my Step Four the nature of my wrongs, consistent with the Fifth Step's suggestion to admit to myself the exact nature of those wrongs. I then gave this to the counselor.

After that, I was in a slump about how to move on with Step Six and asked God to help me become ready to have my defects of character removed. I noticed Step Seven talked about humbly asking God to remove my shortcomings, and realized that before I could do that, or even become ready to have them removed, I had to know what my shortcomings were.

In the process of working on this, I came to realize that I have a lot of blind spots when it comes to my own defects of character, some of which were not touched by several years of inventory work. However, by corresponding with an SAA pen pal, reading self help

literature, and further inventory work and prayer, I was able to learn something else about myself that helped me to work Step Six.

I've become increasingly aware that one of my defects of character is about being a critic. As long as I am focused on the speck in someone else's eye, I don't worry about the beam in my own. Part of what underlies this "sleight of hand" in my conscious awareness is accumulated shame. I can diminish the pain of my own shame by transposing it onto others through the process of criticism. Sometimes I feel righteous for having put someone down or in their place. This is a defect which purposefully hurts others feelings and is capable of goading another addict into relapse. It tends to isolate me from the fellowship of others, and by doing so, renders me more susceptible to relapse myself.

One aspect of my critic is resentment, the polar opposite of acceptance, something the AA *Big Book* refers to as the number one enemy. I am most likely to be critical when I am experiencing resentment about something. Being in a mental attitude of resentment can be dangerous in other ways too. This is when I am

Steps & Traditions

most vulnerable to the use of mood altering substances like addictive sex.

Resentment comes from judging something or someone to be "wrong." Some of the tools I use to counter resentment are catching myself when I preoccupy on resentful thoughts and recognizing what effect they may have or verbalizing what is bothering me. But I often have difficulty doing that in a mature and respectful manner so I often bottle it inside. I also pray and ask God for the serenity to accept the things I can not change, but when things happen that do not seem to square with my idea of God's will, it's easy to revert to this defect of character.

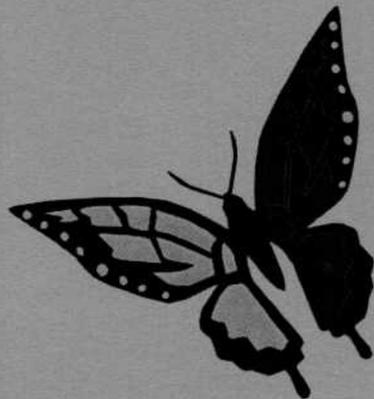
I noticed Step Seven talked about humbly asking God to remove my shortcomings, and realized that before I could do that, or even become ready to have them removed, I had to know what my shortcomings were.

Anyhow, I am making progress in God's process of removing this defect of character from me, but I don't expect it to magically disappear overnight because it is something deeply ingrained into my personality. At least now though I am aware of the defect and recognize it at work. I am also seeing God's help in removing it, little by little, one day at a time.

Anonymous

Life's Worth Living by Frank M.

Life's worth living
No matter what I do
No matter where I am
Either way, life's worth living
No matter who I am
No matter where I came from
No matter where I am to go
Life's worth living
Whatever happens
Whether good or bad
No matter how right or wrong
Life's worth living!



Feature

Struggle and Surrender by John S.

*reprinted with kind permission
from The Outer Circular,
January, 1996*

Let me tell you my story. Perhaps you will see yourself, or a part of yourself. Remember that I am desperate, that I used to be very desperate, that I would do anything if it made me feel complete—if it would make me feel that I was loved, that I was needed.

I am an incest survivor. Mine was mostly a pattern of betrayal, of being sexually and emotionally betrayed by my own family—those that a small child wants to trust, to believe in, those that he wants to believe will protect him and shelter him.

With one brother it was a seductive, very “mixed message” form of abuse. I was given candy sweets for sexual favors. My soul was bartered for small favors, for candy from Walgreens. Insidious and pervasive, it occurred for several years. Loving action, goodies, sleeping with my brother, and accepting gifts in place of the honest intimacy and love a child desires, were coupled and emotionally mixed within me as I sexually gratified him.

I slept with him from age three until six or seven and the randomness of these activities was confusing in that each night I was sleeping with him. In a way, there was no escape.

When I was older, about seven, my eldest brother forcibly used me (raped me, you might say). He is close to ten years older than I am. He was very dominant, forceful and hostile. He used me for sex. I was an object. I have memory of it all. For years I carried it with me, but it had no meaning. It was like I carried someone else’s memory. Later, results would materialize and come back to invade my life a second time.

I am an adult now. The results of what was done to me as an infant and a child have manifested. They made me feel incomplete within. I call this the “black hole” and it is a place inside that is void, scary, terribly empty and desolate, thousands of light years wide, seemingly endless.

The “black hole” drove me to actions that were vain attempts to fill it, actions like: visiting porno shops, picking up guys at rest rooms in parks, cruising the streets to pick up guys, having sex with prostitutes and “street people”, having multiple affairs while in a long-term relationship and having sex in the back of my delivery truck.

Let me tell you the good news: these are also the reasons I belong to my home 12-Step group and attend Sex

Addicts Anonymous meetings. On December 28th of 1992, when my behavior bottomed out, I began the recovery process through SAA. That was the day I got a phone call from yet another one of those people I had an affair with telling me it was over. The relationship, one more person, one more day. A day of pain, tears and, thankfully, action. By noon, I had called a program friend, set up to attend my first SAA meeting later in the week, set an appointment to see my counselor to discuss my acting out behavior, and set myself in motion to confront my personal activities. I have found some positive ways to change my behavior.

I use the 12 steps, I share at meetings, I now use the phone lists (a lot!). I share my emotions and experience by telling my story with honesty and integrity. This helps me to re-parent myself using "gentleness, humor, love and respect". I practice healing myself one day at a time, one hour at a time, one moment at a time.

By defining my three circles and focusing as much as possible on the outer circle, I now create positive activities for myself rather than versions of that old, unhealthy, inner circle behavior. I now try to do such things as

writing, cycling, swimming, calling and seeing friends (non-sexual), attend meetings, eating nutritious food, and reading

positive and spiritual materials.

Has this been a long, lonely struggle? Yes. The struggle has not ended yet. What has changed is my way of dealing with the hope-

lessness, despair and confusion over who I am and where my life is taking me. I now possess moments of fullness, serenity, and a clearer, cleaner knowledge of what I am about.

I have (through the grace of God and my prayers) begun to implement a new tool: a feedback group. We are three strong and safe individuals willing to search for, and get, careful and honest responses at very deep and personal sharing levels.

With the help of my feedback group, I begin to remove myself from that isolating, imprisoned state I used to spend all my days in. Each week, at most meetings, part of the format is to pray for the addict who still suffers. Someone there must have prayed hard for me. It is my turn now to pray for others. The release from isolation helps me stay free. Free to know that I am not alone. Free to say there is hope. Thank God!!!

I now possess moments of fullness, serenity, and a clearer, cleaner knowledge of what I am about.

On the Topic

Experiences of the 9th Annual National SAA Convention, "Circle of Hope: Return to Our Roots" Minneapolis, Minnesota, May 24-27, 1996

It has been more than two months since the convention, but the memories and experiences of our national gathering linger. Two members share their experiences.

Shared by Kevin K.

CONNECTIONS

New and old out of town friends: Bill S., Steve L., Carol C., Derrick, Karen, Jon, Scott, Frank, Patty, David W., Robert F., Alfonso, Robert S., Elizabeth N., Jenny, Pamela, Louis, Bob R., Claude Monet (Haystack, Giverny), Van Gogh (Olive Grove), Gaughan (Polynesian woman, Polynesian landscape).

Fun times: Sunday volleyball, picnic, flirting with two women, drumming. I had so much fun socializing, attending the delegate meetings and attending the banquets that I didn't attend any of the workshops.

Fear times: meeting an attractive woman, dancing, giving a workshop—that I'd not do it right.

WORKSHOPS

I was able to say what worked for me in the two workshops I led on the steps. I didn't attend other workshops. My workshop was on sponsorship. It is the same one

given last year, and it's based on the Working With Others pamphlet, now available from the ISO.

SPEAKERS

As I did last year, I felt gratitude, awe, appreciation for the partners'/companion program, sad, delight, and love.

DINNERS/BANQUETS/ BRUNCH

They served five meals this year, including four jointly with COSA. I liked the meals because it gave us more opportunity to be together and just talk with fellows. I felt welcome by everyone I visited with.

Shared by Mike C.

Pat C. gave an insightful keynote address recounting both his personal story and a history of SAA. He and the ISO literature committee jointly presented the initial outline of the soon-to-be-drafted SAA *Large Book*.

A variety of workshop sessions addressed a broad range of recovery issues. My personal favorite was "Putting Spirituality to Work in Recovery," by Minnesota's Jeff H.

On the Topic

From making new acquaintances to renewing old friendships, from first-time flying experiences to shopping the Mall of America, from one-on-one recovery dialogues until midnight to candle-light check-ins into the early morning, from comederie in our Hoosier hospitality room to the enormous closing "Circle of

Hope" and recitation of the Serenity Prayer with over 300 recovering members, "Returning to Our Roots" was a great adventure in my recovery.

Mike C's sharing is reprinted, with permission, from the Indiana Check-In, Summer 1996. Thanks Bill & Mike!

I Fly Free

I saw a gull today with a broken wing
It ran in fear along the shore but could not
I've been that gull so many times.
Wings dragging.
Feet flying along the shore.
Afraid to soar above the river.
Afraid to dive for the sweet morsels
that lie beneath the water's surface.
Praying that I would live long enough
to heal my broken wings.



Thank you, SAA, for the 12 Steps that lead to healed wings.
Thank you for taking me out of the isolation that the gull
who could not fly was suffering.
Thank you for providing a pack of other gulls with
broken wings who love each other,
whether our wings ever heal or not.
Thank you Dear Teacher, Sponsor, for teaching
me to love myself, even when the wings are broken.
Thank you Higher Power, for showing me every day
that in your world, all is truly well.



I forgive myself.
I let go of the past.
I fly free today.

Fellowship Forum

Dear friends in SAA, I have been stewing in bitterness at my prospects for the future after reading about some of the new demeaning and oppressive laws regulating sex offenders, and been consumed by a growing animosity towards those who proposed these laws and are working to pass even more onerous ones. But since I'd studied a little about recovery, I recognized such obsessions as really being about the cunning nature of my disease at work. Preoccupying with such premonitions of doom instead of turning my concerns over to a power higher than myself brought the exact opposite of acceptance, serenity and peace, a kind of discontent which seeks to both justify and fuel my acting.

My malcontent was so odious that I began verbally attacking my friends in recovery while discussing my feelings with them, a sure sign that my disease was trying to isolate me from the strength of the fellowship. I believe some of these friends must have prayed for me after that happened, because my Higher Power gave me some pointers which helped to restore me to sanity. The first two came from some mediation books a friend in SAA had given me for Christmas.

One book pointed out that hate has its basis in fear, but that a man can be bigger than his fears

would have him be. It reminded me of those I'd been obsessing about, those who "think too much about what is wrong with others and how they ought to change," while calling to mind that I suffered from the same obsession. Such obsessing can actually be a form of hatred. My own ill toward those people derived from their sense of fear towards me or people like me. Recognizing this fear helped diminish the power of my hatred and put me in touch with "the bigger man within." An affirmation about having the "inner strength to face my fears today instead of sending them outwards as hatred" helped me to see this option.

A few days later another meditation from *Answers in the Heart* emerged to remind me of my superstitious tendency to "interpret signs in negative or hostile ways." It pointed out that positive signs were all around if one looked and helped me to see that I really didn't want to be obsessed by premonitions of doom and that I instead had the option of patience and hope. I also read something in a Mass missal which warned against exactly what I'd been doing—hating my brother in my heart. It said it was okay to rebuke someone instead of hearing his mistreatment in silence, but reminded me that I was not to hold a grudge against anyone, but to instead love folks

as I would myself. This spoke right to where I was.

Finally, the "long" version of the Serenity Prayer struck home by encouraging me to accept hardship as a pathway to peace, "taking this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it (be), trusting that God will make all things right if I surrender to His will." This is the exact opposite of what I had been doing.

These thoughts helped me and maybe you will find them helpful, too. Please pray for me.

Harvey A.

Dear PBR, I sincerely appreciate what Louis W. had to say about his experiences as an incest survivor

and member of SAA. As someone with little memory of sexual abuse in my own childhood, I need people like Louis to share with me why they feel that their childhood experiences were harmful to them without also condemning me as a person. Without this information, I have nothing to counteract the stinking thinking which tells me that sexual contact with children is okay. Even when the information is provided, it is very difficult to accept when mixed together with messages of hatred or condemnation. Much thanks to Louis and all other incest and abuse survivors who have allowed me to see their pain without blinding me with their hatred.

Anonymous

The Path

Fear blinds me.
I refuse to let fear in.
I refuse to act on my fear.

Anger hurts me.
I refuse to act on my anger.
I refuse to hurt myself.
I refuse to hurt others.

In loneliness I lost hope.
I refuse to be lonely.
I refuse to be alone.

In silence my mind was closed.
I refuse to let silence close my mind.
I refuse to be silent.

The Gift

I feel my feelings.
I love to feel my feelings.
I feel to live and live to feel.

I want to live.
I want to love.
I live to love and love to live.
I love myself.

God loves me.
I love God.
God saves me.
I let God save me.

Announcements

FRIENDS OF THE LITERATURE COMMITTEE (FOLC)

Your Feedback is Requested

SAA Homepage Available on the Internet

<http://www.sexaa.org>

The SAA homepage is in a developmental stage. We need feedback from the fellowship of SAA to assist the Literature Committee, and the entire SAA fellowship, in carrying our message of hope.

If you are able, please surf on over to the WorldWideWeb site listed above. Remember that the site is still under construction and only with your feedback and input can we give it shape and direction as guided by the conscience of the fellowship.

You may e-mail comments to:

Jerry B., ISO Office Manager (JerryB1012@aol.com)

or

webmaster@sexaa.org

You may mail comments to:

Jerry B, ISO Office Manager

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Houston, TX 77270

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